

Snohomish County Tomorrow

A GROWTH MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL



COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Thursday, July 15, 2021

Via Zoom

6:00 pm to 8:00 pm

MINUTES

Participating Jurisdictions/Members:

Alice Armstrong	Snohomish
Isaac Harrison	Mountlake Terrace
Heidi Johnson	Snohomish area
Phil Lovell	Edmonds, Co-chair
Hillary Moralez	Unincorporated Bothell, Co-chair
Jeanine SanClemente	Maltby Area
Sean Sandefer	Sultan
Michelle Stewart	Everett Unincorporated
Trey Villanueva	Snohomish

Other Attendees/Presenters:

Anne Anderson	Toyer Strategic Advisors
Karen Anderson	Snohomish County Executive's Office
Cynthia Pruitt	SCT Coordinator

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by Co-chair Phil Lovell.

2. Roll Call and Welcome new members

Roll call was taken, with attendees as listed above. Members introduced themselves along with their areas of interest and reasons for joining CAB.

3. Action Items

a. Approval of minutes (5-20-21)

Jeanine SanClemente moved, and Trey Villanueva seconded a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was approved with one abstention.

b. Confirm CAB representative to the July 28, 2021, Steering Committee meeting

Phil Lovell volunteered to be the CAB representative at the July 28, 2021, Steering Committee meeting.

4. Discussion Items

a. Density Models

Phil Lovell summarized the report that the Housing Working Group had prepared. Jeanine SanClemente clarified that Fred Safstrom did not say the UGA needed to be expanded; Mr. Lovell confirmed. She also disagreed with Mike Appleby's perspective. She offered several articles about what millennials look for in housing. (The articles' assumptions are that millennials will be a big proportion of those looking for homes.) Millennials will be less likely to want to own single family (SF) homes and will want less debt and have fewer children. They want to live in cities, therefore there might be less of an argument to expand the UGA boundaries.

Heidi Johnson agreed with Ms. SanClemente. There should continue to be building of homes but not per Mr. Appleby's framework. Also, the elderly want to downsize; there is a need for small multi-family (MF) homes. She prefers to not expand the UGA but rather make sure we have done everything to avoid that. We need affordable housing, not just housing for low income.

Phil Lovell stated that housing costs are rising so affordability is falling. Cities and the county must do more within their boundaries to make land available. The HART report called for developing MF close to transportation such as light rail, but that does not meet all people's needs. Some want to live in rural areas, for instance.

Alice Armstrong called for creative solutions. In looking at affordable and/or low-income housing she hears "not on my block" when it comes to building that housing. If we want to use underdeveloped spaces for mixed level housing, we should provide incentives for neighborhoods and jurisdictions to provide that housing.

Sean Sandefer discussed the average cost of housing and provided links that show that information. (<https://wcrer.be.uw.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/41/2021/05/2021Q1Snapshot.pdf> and <https://wcrer.be.uw.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/41/2021/05/2021Q1WSHMR.pdf>) This data shows that families cannot afford the average cost of housing.

Phil Lovell noted there is an affordability problem in the county and throughout the state.

(In response to Michelle's question, Hillary described the CAB's survey in the last year and their setting priorities for work this year on housing density and quality of life.)

Heidi Johnson said that the BLR is coming up and this issue is related to it.

Hillary Moralez noted that she lives in Clearview on a 2.5-acre lot. But only one house is allowed on it. Across the street MF is going in. We cannot think about growth unless the long term (people moving in now) are considered.

Sean Sandefer said Sultan would love to have MF but cannot get developers to build it. Most developers now are not local, and they do not care [what the city's goals are].

Isaac Harrison said that Mountlake Terrace plans to change areas from SF to MF. The development community says that the switch will bring housing prices down but that has not been true according to a friend who recently looked at a townhouse. It was the same price as an older home in the city.

Phil Lovell said that construction costs are increasing and building codes are requiring more measures - increasing developers' costs. So, they charge more for houses.

Heidi Johnson pointed out that HB 1590 [a 1/10 of 1% of sales tax for housing] has not been passed by Snohomish County.

Sean Sandefer added that the county has only 60 days to act on that. If they do not opt out it becomes effective. Zoning in jurisdictions is an issue. He posted a link in the chat: <https://app.leg.wa.gov/bills/summary?BillNumber=1590&Year=2019>

Alice Armstrong pointed out that a CAB member previously suggested a web of streets and transit feeding into communities and rail (including in rural areas). We must find the balance in preserving rural areas and providing for growth.

Sean Sandefer said that Sultan is on a transportation route [Highway 2]. Because of geography they would lose the first block of their downtown if Highway 2 was widened.

Phil said that [CAB members should] pursue the need for affordable housing in their towns through zoning, transportation and housing.

Sean asked if the E/W Sound Transit light rail would happen. (Then it might extend to the east and to Duvall.)

The committee walked through the things that they felt were significant from their discussion. Their list included:

1. Expansion of the UGA is not necessary to make more land available for housing. (All agreed this is significant and stood out for them.)
2. There needs to be incentives to develop affordable housing (All agreed)
3. Zoning changes are needed to allow more MF housing (One disagreed, two abstained)
4. When the population/community is less informed and less engaged, they are not represented, and poor zoning is applied. This is an equity issue. (All agreed)
5. Affordable housing; housing prices are not sustainable. Allowing MF will not change that. We need to pay attention in order to make housing affordable to the average worker. (Two disagreed, three abstained)
6. Zoning; every city should look at zoning practices in the past and how it has affected their city today. And what is needed now. (All)
7. [Affordable housing] is a difficult issue that spans socio-economic and geographic regions. Smart, data-driven expansion is recommended. Identify areas where expansion was unfair [and remedy that]. There is a need for thoughtful planning and regulation to remove barriers (e.g. in rural areas). There is a need to encourage our political leaders to identify solutions that they will put into play in a timely way. (One abstention)

8. Partnership with transportation and planning is key. (All)
9. Areas will be grabbed up by developers and will be at risk for unplanned development (before regulation is in place). (Three disagreed, three abstained)
10. For a developer to buy land and develop it, it must be zoned and have infrastructure. (One abstention)

The members discussed the next steps:

- Edit this list (perhaps combining some and fleshing out others)
- Add these issues to the Future Agenda Items
- Look at already published studies (e.g. HART strategies)

Ms. Pruitt agreed to send the list of significant issues out to the CAB along with a rough draft of the minutes. The CAB will edit them to try to find common ground, combining and expanding the language so it can be used in a report. At the next meeting the members will vote on the language. Phil Lovell may report this discussion to the Steering Committee on July 28th also.

b. Coordinator's Report

Ms. Pruitt will work with the Co-chairs to provide a time for public comment on the CAB's agenda.

Ms. Pruitt reminded members about the required training. She asked if any were having problems accessing county emails. She also pointed out the new roster that has email addresses of each member.

5. Discussion of Future Agenda items

The members discussed the list and Ms. Pruitt said that we try to combine those subjects with other GMA-related presentations.

6. Next Meeting Dates

a. Steering Committee: Wednesday, July 28, 2021

b. Community Advisory Board: September 16, 2021, via Zoom

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:54 pm by Co-chair, Phil Lovell.

Item 4.a., Density

Points 1-10, pages 3-4 as re-worded via email 7-26-21

1. Expansion of the UGA is not necessary to make more land available for housing, as there is still capacity to rezone areas of the County to accommodate growth and there are areas that are zoned residential but that are not used as well as they could be. Zoning is a significant regulatory tool that cities should use to increase the capacity for housing within their jurisdictions with the goal of allowing more multifamily housing.
2. As zoning is reviewed, the County and other jurisdictions should review the impacts of past zoning practices on its communities.
3. Communities should be fully informed, engaged, and represented in planning decisions to ensure equity.

POTENTIAL ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE:

Do cities need to engage with their population when adjust zoning code? Or community engagement needs to be more equitable and engage more with under-represented communities?

proposed zoning changes should involve wide community engagement and input

4. [Two disagreed, three abstained; DELETE THIS ONE?]
Affordable housing incentives can spur developer investment and help fill an important gap in the current housing market and need.

POTENTIAL ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE:

Affordable housing; housing prices are not sustainable. Allowing MF will not change that. We need to pay attention in order to make housing affordable to the average worker.

5. It is critical that growth in our County be planned in alignment with [or: considering] expansion of the transportation infrastructure needed to support it.

POTENTIAL ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE:

For a developer to buy land and develop it, it must be zoned and have infrastructure.

6. ORIGINAL INCORPORATED IN OTHER POINTS

7. ORIGINAL INCORPORATED IN OTHER POINTS

8. Partnership with transportation and planning is key.

9. [Three disagreed, three abstained; #9 is deleted] ~~Areas will be grabbed up by developers and will be at risk for unplanned development (before regulation is in~~

place).

10. [One agrees; one disagrees] For a developer to buy land and develop it, it must be zoned and have infrastructure.